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ABSTRACT

This document contains samples and explanations from Colorado's state reading and writing comprehension test for Grade 7, hereby released to the public (parents, teachers, and any other interested parties). It presents one multiple-choice reading comprehension item based upon a poem and includes the correct answers. Next, it presents two short passages (one from a novel, one from an essay) and two writing prompts based on them, the scoring guide, and 8 different student responses, with the scores they received. Finally, it presents one essay item and responses from 5 different students, with their scores. (SR)

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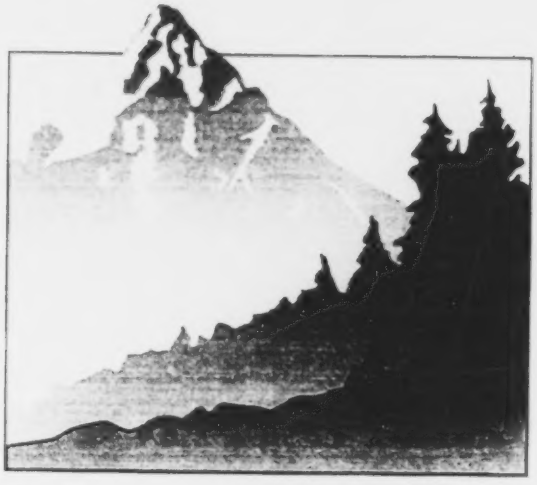

Released Passages, Items, and Prompts

Grade 7 Reading and Writing Comprehension

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CSAP

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M. Burt

CSAP Grade 7
Reading

Directions

Here is a poem by Lilian Moore. Read the poem. Then do Numbers 1 through 6.

WET

Wet wet wet
the world of melting winter,
icicles weeping themselves away
on the eaves
little brown rivers streaming
down the road
nibbling
at the edges of the tired snow,
    all puddled mud
    not a dry place to put
    a booted foot,
everything
    dripping
    gushing
    slushing
    slipping
and listen to that brook,
rushing
like a puppy loosed from its leash.

1 In the poem, the phrase "icicles weeping themselves away" describes

- ○ sadness at the cold of winter.
- ● how the icicles are melting.
- ○ tears of joy for the coming season.
- ○ how the icicles withstand the cold.

2 The poet makes the snow seem alive by describing it as

- ● tired.
- ○ tearful.
- ○ rushing.
- ○ nibbling.

"Wet" from *Sam's Place* by Lilian Moore, copyright © 1973 by Lilian Moore. Used by permission of Marian Reiner, Literary Agent.

3 According to the poet, a puppy and the brook are alike because they both

- ○ get wet.
- ● rush about.
- ○ wear leashes.
- ○ lose their way.

4 What time of year does the poem probably take place?

- ○ when summer ends
- ○ when the leaves turn
- ● at the end of winter
- ○ at the first snowfall

5 Read this section of the poem.

everything
dripping
gushing
slushing
slipping

This is an example of

- ○ metaphor.
- ● onomatopoeia.
- ○ personification.
- ○ simile.

6 The poet uses a simile to describe

- ○ icicles melting.
- ○ snow eroding.
- ● the motion of a brook.
- ○ the freedom of a puppy.

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CSAP Grade 7
Reading

Directions

Patricia MacLachlan, the author of *Sarah, Plain and Tall,* was born in Wyoming and raised in Minnesota. In the essay that follows, MacLachlan discusses some ideas about place. Read the essay.

Bringing the Prairie Home

by Patricia MacLachlan

Place.

This is one of my favorite words, and I am a writer because of it.

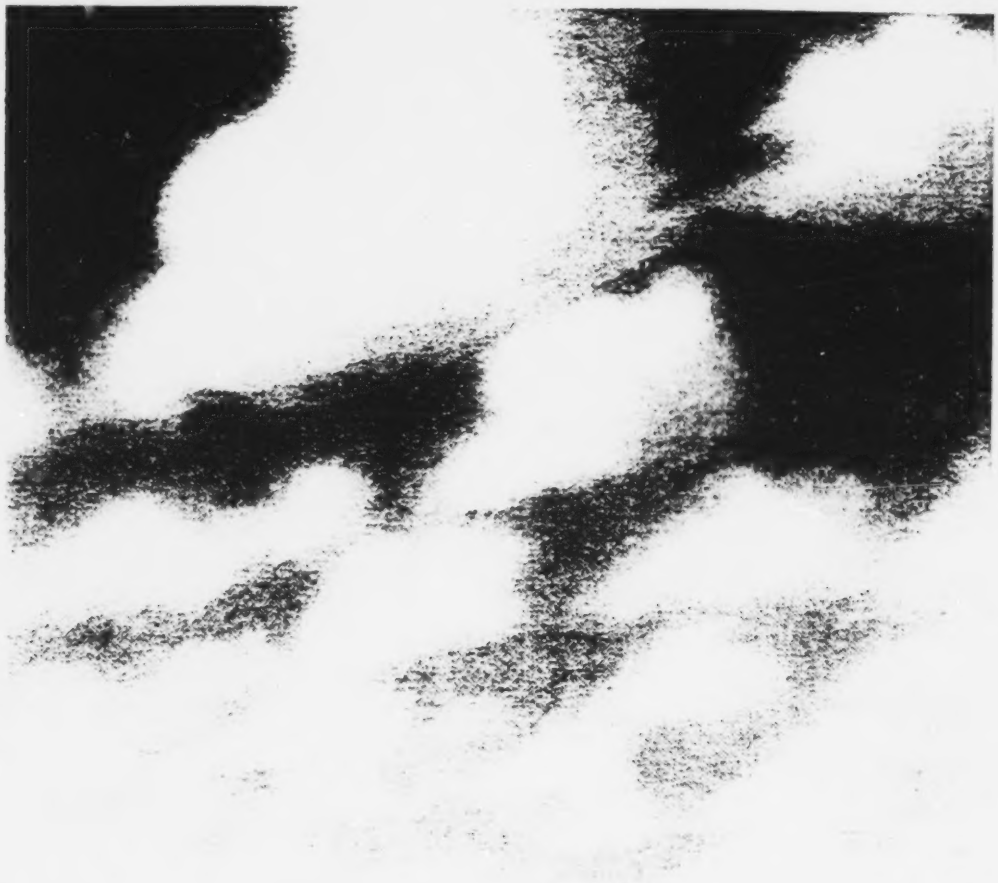
Place.

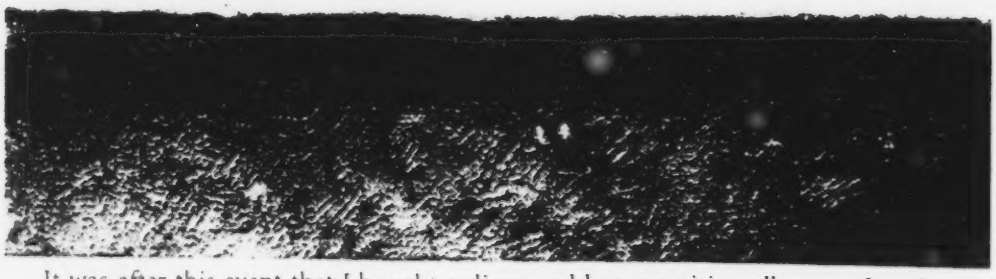
I remember vividly the place where I was born: the smell of the earth, the look of the skies when storms came through; the softness of my mother's hollyhock blooms that grew by the back fence.

When I was ten years old, I fell in love with place. My parents and I drove through the prairie, great stretches of land between small towns named wonderful names like Spotted Horse, Rattlesnake, Sunrise. We stopped once for drinks that we fished out of cold-water lift-top tanks, and my mother and I walked out onto the prairie. Then my mother said something that changed my life forever. She took a step, looked down at her footprint, and said, "Someone long ago may have walked here, or maybe no one ever has. Either way it's history."

I thought of those who might have come before me and those who might come after, but mostly I was face-to-face with the important, hopeful permanence of place, place that I knew was there long before I walked there, and would be there long after I was gone. I realized, in that moment, that the Earth is history. The Earth is like a character who has secrets; the Earth holds important clues to who we are, who we've been; who we will be. We are connected to the land and to those secrets.

"Bringing the Prairie Home" by Patricia MacLachlan, copyright © 1993 by Patricia MacLachlan,first appeared in *The Big Book for Our Planet,* published by E. P. Dutton. Reprinted by permission of Curtis Brown, Ltd. Illustration of person observing the sky copyright © 1993 by Steve Johnson and Lou Rancher. Reprinted by permission.





It was after this event that I bought a diary and began writing all sorts of truths about myself, as if I, too, might leave clues about myself behind. I was becoming a writer. All because of place. Now I cannot write a story unless I know the place, the landscape that shapes the story and the people in the story. And to remind myself of the place that changed me, I have carried a small bag of prairie dirt with me for years.

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I took that bag of prairie dirt with me once to a class of fourth-graders, and I found that those children are connected to place, too. Some had moved from place to place many times: One boy's house had burned in a fire recently; another was about to move to a place he had never been.

"Maybe," I said, "I should toss this out onto my New England yard. I'll probably never live on the prairie again."

"*No!*" cried a boy, horrified. "It might blow away!"

And then a girl had a suggestion.

"Maybe you should put that prairie dirt in a glass on your windowsill, so you can see it when you write. It would be like bringing the prairie home."

And that is where that little piece of my prairie is today; my place, my past, my landscape; in a glass on my windowsill. I have brought the prairie home so that I can look at it every day; write about it, write about me, and remind myself that the land is the connection that links us all.

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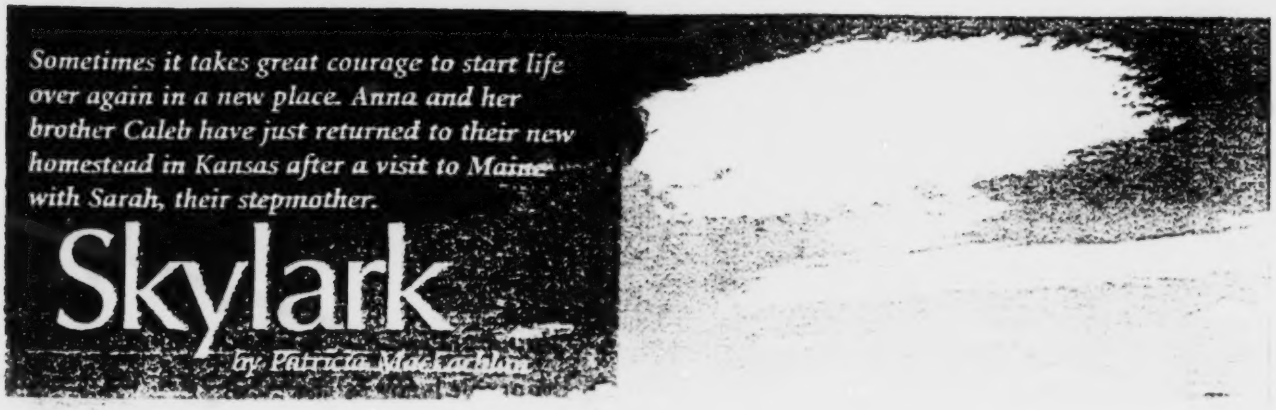
Directions

Here is a passage from Patricia MacLachlan's novel *Skylark*. Read the passage. Then do Numbers 1 and 2.


Sometimes it takes great courage to start life over again in a new place. Anna and her brother Caleb have just returned to their new homestead in Kansas after a visit to Maine with Sarah, their stepmother.
Skylark
by Patricia MacLachlan

Home.

It has rained twice. But there is still dust. The corn still rattles in the wind.

The green of Maine seems to be only a dream. When we came home by train, we passed trees and hills and lakes filled with water. They are beautiful, the trees and hills and lakes filled with water. But the prairie is home, the sky so big it takes your breath away, the land like a giant quilt tossed out.

It will rain again. There is some water in the pond. Not enough for swimming, but there will be. There will be flowers in the spring, and the river will run again. And in the spring there will be the new baby, Papa and Sarah's baby.

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Excerpt from *Skylark* by Patricia MacLachlan, copyright © 1994 by Patricia MacLachlan. Used by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

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1 In *Skylark*, the narrator uses a simile. Identify the simile and explain what the simile means.

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2 "Bringing the Prairie Home" and *Skylark* have similar themes. In the chart below

- state the theme that is common to both selections.
- give one example from each selection that develops that theme.

Theme: _____

_____

_____

Example from "Bringing the Prairie Home"	Example from *Skylark*
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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SKYLARK

Item 1:

In *Skylark*, the narrator uses a simile. Identify the simile and explain what the simile means.

Rubric

Exemplary Response

- simile: "the land like a giant quilt tossed out"
- the land is compared to a giant quilt
- the land is divided into sections/colors, like a quilt
- the land is comforting/homey, like a quilt
- the land is beautiful/immense, like a quilt

Score Points: 3 points possible

- 1 point for identifying the simile (first bullet)
- 1 point for indicating that the land is being **compared** to a quilt (second bullet)
- 1 point for indicating the meaning of the simile (any of last 3 bullets)

Standard 6: Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.

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SKYLARK and BRINGING THE PRAIRIE HOME

Item 2:

"Bringing the Prairie Home" and *Skylark* have similar themes. In the chart below

- state the theme that is common to both selections.
- give one example from each selection that develops that theme.

Rubric

Exemplary Response:

Theme: a version of
- love of the land
- connection to the land
- sense of land as "home"

Examples from "Bringing the Prairie Home"
- "place" is her favorite word
- memories of the place she was born
- mother's statement that changed her life
- sense of history, permanence of place
- Earth holds secrets
- connection to land/its secrets
- became a writer because of connection to place
- carried small bag of prairie dirt
- discovered children's connection to place
- put prairie dirt on window sill as a reminder
- any other text-based example

Examples from *Skylark*
- descriptions of the beauty of the land
- prairie is home
- sky so big it takes your breath away
- land like a giant quilt
- arrival of the new baby in the spring
- any other text-based example

Score Points: 3 points possible

- 1 point for statement of theme
- 1 point for example from "Bringing the Prairie Home"
- 1 point for example from *Skylark*

Standard 14: Students read and understand a variety of materials.

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7R18-A3

T8 In this passage, the narrator uses a simile. Identify the simile and explain what the simile means.

The simile is the land like a giant quilt tossed out. That means that the land is flat and beautiful like a quilt. She imagines that the land is similer to a quilt.

3

IR10-12

18 In this passage, the narrator uses a simile. Identify the simile and explain what the simile means.

The land like a giant quilt tossed out. The simile means it is a flat land with wonderest designs of the land.

2

7R18-A1

18 In this passage, the narrator uses a simile. Identify the simile and explain what the simile means.

The simile is like when she says that the land looks like a quilt. She is comparing the landscape to a quilt.

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1

7R18-AØ

In this passage, the narrator uses a simile. Identify the simile and explain what the simile means.

The simile was not enough water to swim. A simile is it has it but it's not enough to do what whom ever wants to do.

Ø

7R19-A3

Directions
Do Number 19.

19 "Bringing the Prairie Home" and *Skylark* have similar themes. In the chart below

- state the theme that is common to both selections
- give one example from each selection that develops that theme

Theme: a person's connection to the place of their birth or home

Example from "Bringing the Prairie Home"	Example from *Skylark*
And that is where that little piece of prairie is today, my place, my past and my landscape	But the prairie is home, with a sky so big it takes your breath away and the land like a giant quilt tossed out.

3

Go On

7R19-A2

Directions

Do Number 19.

19 "Bringing the Prairie Home" and *Skylark* have similar themes. In the chart below

- state the theme that is common to both selections
- give one example from each selection that develops that theme

Theme: They both have to do with 'Prairie'

Example from "Bringing the Prairie Home"	Example from *Skylark*
I carried a bag of dirt from the prairie	the land is like a giant quilt tossed out (the prairie land)

(2)

Go On

7R19-A1

Directions

Do Number 19.

19 "Bringing the Prairie Home" and *Skylark* have similar themes. In the chart below

- state the theme that is common to both selections
- give one example from each selection that develops that theme

Theme: A common theme is that in the two stories is there's no place like home.

Example from "Bringing the Prairie Home"	Example from *Skylark*
The place here is on the prairie.	The place here is in Maine

(1)

Go On

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7R19-AØ

Directions

Do Number 19.

19 "Bringing the Prairie Home" and *Skylark* have similar themes. In the chart below

- state the theme that is common to both selections
- give one example from each selection that develops that theme

Theme: Bringing the Prairie home and the Skylark.

Example from "Bringing the Prairie Home"	Example from *Skylark*
How people thinks about the prairie and bringing it home.	How the skylarks is common about Bringing the Prairie home.

Ø

Go On

CSAP Grade 7
Writing

Directions

Do Number 1.

1 Identify an animal that has gained a reputation—good or bad—based on popular beliefs. Then decide whether or not the reputation is deserved, and **persuade** the reader to agree with your reasoning.

You do not have to use all the lines. Just write on as many as you need.

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Directions

For Numbers 1 and 2, choose the word that best completes the sentence.

1 Carol hasn't _____ her chores yet.

- ○ do
- ○ did
- ● done
- ○ doing

2 Megan Jones was the artist _____ sculpture was on display at the museum.

- ○ who
- ○ whom
- ○ which
- ● whose

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7W-71A-4

Identify an animal that has gained a reputation—good or bad—based on popular beliefs. Then decide whether or not the reputation is deserved, and **persuade** the reader to agree with your reasoning.

You do not have to use all the lines. Just write on as many as you need.

There are many common animals that are supposed to bring good - or bad - luck to the owners. A black cat just crossed your path! Quick! Throw some salt over your shoulder! I really don't think it's worth the trouble, and I'll tell you why... SILLY SUPERSTITIONS!

Black cats have crossed my path numerous times. I have actually had great days! One day my neighbor's coal-colored cat, Midnight, darted right in front of me as I walked to school. When I got to school, what did I find? Mayhem? Madness? No, I got 100% on a math test and no homework. If that's bad luck, I want some more! The only reason black cats are said to be bad luck is because back in the 17th century, it was noticed that an accused witch kept the company of a black cat. Soon these ebony creatures were associated with witches, and if it crossed your path you better watch out. So next time Blacky streaks by, smile and keep going.

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Identify an animal that has gained a reputation—good or bad—based on popular beliefs. Then decide whether or not the reputation is deserved, and **persuade** the reader to agree with your reasoning.

You do not have to use all the lines. Just write on as many as you need.

A dog because it is mans best friend. More and more people are getting dogs for protection and comfort. The blind use dog for giudese. Cops use dogs for sniffing out drugs. Dogs are fun to play with. they only thang bad about owning a dog is the barking at night.

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7W-71A-2

Identify an animal that has gained a reputation—good or bad—based on popular beliefs. Then decide whether or not the reputation is deserved, and **persuade** the reader to agree with your reasoning.

You do not have to use all the lines. Just write on as many as you need.

A pit bull because it has a bad rep. It can kill or hurt a kid really bad. It has a bad temper too.

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7W-71A-1

Identify an animal that has gained a reputation—good or bad—based on popular beliefs. Then decide whether or not the reputation is deserved, and **persuade** the reader to agree with your reasoning.

You do not have to use all the lines. Just write on as many as you need.

Tigers are very wild.

7W-71A-0

Identify an animal that has gained a reputation—good or bad—based on popular beliefs. Then decide whether or not the reputation is deserved, and **persuade** the reader to agree with your reasoning.

You do not have to use all the lines. Just write on as many as you need.

They samIP all day. They eat mas+ the time. They mure they can do must the time and they can go outside and get ther frood and they have to be carul with other tkers. They have other clulls off bifferent cat's.

The
End

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